



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
TRAINING COMMAND
3300 RUSSELL ROAD
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134-5050

TRNGCOMO 1700.2
C47
3 Apr 03

TRAINING COMMAND ORDER 1700.2

From: Commanding General
To: Distribution List

Subj: REQUEST MAST

Ref: (a) MCO 1700.23E
(b) U.S. Navy Regulations
(c) Marine Corps Manual
(d) MCO P1900.16E
(e) JAGMAN
(f) MCO P5354.1C
(g) MCO 5040.6E

Encl: (1) Marine Corps Request Mast Application (NAVMC 11296)
(2) Instructions on how to prepare NAVMC 11296

1. Purpose. This Order promulgates Request Mast policies and procedures for Marines assigned to units subordinate to Training Command, in accordance with reference (a).

2. Cancellation. TRNGCOMO 1700.1.

3. Summary of Revision. This Order contains significant revisions, which clarify the Training Command Request Mast program and should be reviewed in its entirety.

4. Background. The right of all Marines to directly communicate grievances to, or seek assistance from, their Commanding Officer is established in reference (b) (Arts. 0820c and 1151.1), and reference (c) (par 2805), and is exercised through the formal process of Request Mast. Request Mast includes both the right of the Marine to communicate with their Commander, normally in person, and the requirement that the Commander consider the matter and personally respond to the Marine requesting mast. Request Mast provides a Marine the opportunity to communicate not only with their immediate Commanding Officer, but also with any superior Commander in the chain of command up to and including the Marine's immediate Commanding General. Request Mast also provides Commanders with first hand knowledge of the morale and general welfare of the command. To be effective, the Training Command Request Mast program must have the wholehearted support of those to whom the leadership of our Marines is entrusted. Anyone who attempts to deprive a Marine of the right to Request Mast, through either acts of omission or commission, will be subject to punishment under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Request Mast does not preclude the informal process of communication which, occurs between seniors and subordinates.

5. Information. For the purpose of Request Masts occurring within Training Command the following definitions apply:

a. "Marine" includes all Active and Reserve Marines and uniformed members of other services who are assigned to units subordinate to Training Command, including those attached or serving on temporary additional duty.

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b. "Commander" includes the Marine's immediate Commanding Officer (officer with Nonjudicial Punishment authority) and every Commanding Officer in the chain of command up to and including the Commanding General, Training Command. It also includes Officers in Charge and Marine Corps Representatives (provided the Officer in Charge or Marine Corps Representative is vested with Nonjudicial Punishment authority).

c. "Commanding General" is the Commanding General, Training Command, or any officer serving in an acting capacity for the Commanding General, Training Command.

d. "Communicate" includes the opportunity to appear personally before a Commander, or the right to either correspond with that officer in writing, or speak with that officer by telephone.

6. Policy.

a. Request Mast is the principal means for a Marine to formally communicate a grievance to, or seek assistance from, their Commander. The process does not include those outside the official chain of command such as subordinate officers, staff noncommissioned officers, and noncommissioned officers. Once a Marine has indicated their desire to Request Mast with the Commander, noncommissioned officers, staff noncommissioned officers, and officers subordinate to the Commander will make no effort to delay the Request Mast process in order to solve the problem themselves, but rather will focus their effort on making the Marine available to the Commander.

b. Request Mast is not intended to be used for the purpose of harassment, avoiding duty, or intentionally interfering with the Commander's ability to carry out the functions and mission of the command.

c. A Commander may deny a Request Mast if there is another specific avenue of redress available to the Marine. Commanders should carefully evaluate each Request Mast to determine if other peripheral issues should be addressed; accordingly, Commanders may wish to hear the Marine's presentation of matters before making a decision to deny. The Commander shall explain to the Marine why the Request Mast was denied and, if appropriate, what procedures must be followed to resolve the issue. The authority to deny the Request Mast includes authority to refuse to further process the Request Mast. Whenever a Commander denies a Request Mast under this authority, they shall, within 72 hours, forward a report of such action and the basis thereof to the Commanding General, Training Command via the chain of command.

(1) The Uniform Code of Military Justice provides for the protection of the rights of a Marine at every stage of disciplinary action from investigation through final review or appeal. Accordingly, Commanders may deny a Request Mast that has as its subject disciplinary action whether contemplated, pending, in progress, or final. Request Mast is not intended to be used as a means of collateral attack against the proceedings, punishment, or findings and sentence resulting from disciplinary action brought under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

(2) Reference (d), chapters 4 and 6, contain provisions for the protection of rights of Marines being processed for involuntary administrative separation. Accordingly, Commanders may deny a Request Mast that has as its subject involuntary administrative discharge proceedings whether contemplated, pending, in progress, or final.

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(3) Chapter III of reference (e) contains guidance for the preparation, submission, and processing of complaints under Article 138 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and Article 1150 of reference (b). Commanders may deny a Request Mast if its subject is an ongoing Article 138 or 1150 investigation. The Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Marine Corps Base, Quantico, Virginia should be consulted in such instances.

d. Request Mast is the preferred method for submitting Equal Opportunity formal complaints of discrimination, to include Sexual Harassment. Request Mast may also be used to address other complaints such as hazing.

e. A Marine does not have to disclose the subject of the Request Mast to anyone in the chain of command except to the Commander with whom the Marine is Requesting Mast.

f. When the operational commitments of a Marine's command, whether for training or actual employment, would be unreasonably interfered with by adherence to the procedures set forth in this Order, the right of the Marine to Request Mast to a Commander above the level of the immediate Commander may be suspended by the Commanding General, Training Command for the duration of the commitment. The authority to suspend will be invoked sparingly and then only to the extent required to ensure the accomplishment of the command's mission. Any such suspension and the reasons therefore shall be made known to all Marines whose rights may be affected.

g. Although a Marine may be granted the privilege of forwarding an application for Request Mast to Commanders superior to the Commanding General, Training Command, there is no vested right to Request Mast with such higher Commanders.

(1) Applications for Request Mast with the Commandant of the Marine Corps or with the Secretary of the Navy, via the Commandant of the Marine Corps, will only be considered if specifically recommended by the Commanding General endorsing the application. Absent such specific recommendation, that Commander shall not forward the application. Any Request Mast received by Headquarters, United States Marine Corps that does not include a favorable recommendation for consideration and any Request Mast not forwarded via the chain of command will be returned without action. Such applications for Request Mast must be in writing, and those addressed to the Commandant of the Marine Corps will be answered in writing. Those Request Masts addressed to the Secretary of the Navy, via the Commandant of the Marine Corps, will be forwarded with a recommended response.

(2) Request Mast applications to the Commandant of the Marine Corps will be handled by the Inspector General of the Marine Corps (IGMC).

h. Nothing in this Order is intended to expand or abridge the rights of Marines otherwise guaranteed by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, Federal Law, or applicable Department of Defense, Navy, or Marine Corps Regulations. The exercise of such rights is not governed by the procedures contained in this Order.

i. Enclosure (1) of reference (a) contains instruction for establishing a command Request Mast program, required paragraphs within the command's Request Mast Directive, and procedures for processing Request Mast applications.

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j. Marines who, in good faith, wish to Request Mast may do so without fear of reprisal or prejudice. Any interference with a Marine's right to Request Mast or any attempt of reprisal against a Marine who has Requested Mast is prohibited. Any Marine who attempts to violate, violates, or solicits another to attempt to violate or violate this Order is subject to disciplinary action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. This Order is a lawful general order and is effective immediately.

k. Marines confined in correctional facilities have the right to Request Mast. A Request Mast marked "To be opened by the Commanding Officer/Commanding General only" will not be opened by correctional facilities personnel.

7 Procedures.

a. Each Intermediate Commander shall attempt to resolve the Request Mast issue, if revealed, without delay. If the Marine is not satisfied, forward the Request Mast without delay to the Commander with whom the Marine requested mast. There should be no more than one working day delay at any level of command. Delays must be explained to the Marine and the chain of command.

b. If a Request Mast addressed to a higher commander is resolved at a lower level, the Marine will initial the appropriate line in Part III of enclosure (1), indicating that they are satisfied with the action taken at the lower level and have chosen to voluntarily withdraw the Request Mast. This statement will be signed jointly by the Marine and a witness.

c. Request Masts will be conducted at the earliest reasonable time. In general, there should be no more than 1 working day delay at any level of command. Commanders will hear emergency cases as soon as initially submitted. For purposes of example, to determine whether a Request Mast is an emergency case, among other things, consider (1) whether the Marine is subject to an ongoing hardship; (2) the severity of hardship, if any; and (3) if the issue will remain unresolved upon a certain date, time, or expected event in the immediate future (e.g. request for leave to attend a relative's funeral being denied).

d. Commanders shall make every effort to provide the Marine with an opportunity to Request Mast in person. If personal appearance is not practical, the commander shall respond in writing to the Request Mast. The commander will also provide an explanation of why a personal appearance was not practical.

e. Commander's with whom a Marine has Requested Mast will forward to the next higher commander those Requests Masts deemed to be legitimate grievances or requests for assistance which are beyond the commander's authority to resolve.

f. Request Mast applications addressed to the Commanding General, Training Command must comply with the following instructions:

(1) The Marine will prepare enclosure (1) (NAVMC 11296) in accordance with the instructions provided in enclosure (2), detailing the reasons for the Request Mast. Supporting documents should be attached to the statement. The statement may also include a list of witnesses with a summary of the expected testimony of each witness. The statement must include a summary of the responsive action taken by each Commander in the chain of command with whom the Marine has communicated their problem.

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(2) Each intermediate Commander, to whom the Marine reveals the Request Mast subject, will provide a written statement as to their understanding of the Request Mast subject and their responsive action. Each statement will be added to the Request Mast prior to the Marine communicating the Request Mast to the next higher Commander.

(3) If the Marine has not revealed the subject of the Request Mast to other Commanders in the chain of command, the Marine must include an explanatory statement. The Marine may place the Request Mast in an envelope marked "To be opened by the Commanding General only."

(4) The point of contact to coordinate enlisted Request Mast with the Commanding General, Training Command is the Sergeant Major, Training Command. The point of contact to coordinate officer Request Mast with the Commanding General, Training Command is the Adjutant, Training Command.

g. Resolution of the Request Mast.

(1) Once properly submitted, the Commanding General, Training Command will hear Request Masts at the earliest reasonable opportunity either via personal appearance, if practical, written correspondence, or by telephone, as deemed appropriate. Regardless of the means by which the Request Mast is conducted, the Commanding General will respond to all Request Masts in writing utilizing enclosure (1).

(2) Though the Marine's Request Mast may not be resolved to their satisfaction, all Marine's requesting mast will be afforded an opportunity to communicate with their immediate Commander, and all other officers in their chain of command, up to and including the Commanding General, Training Command. The Marine requesting mast will be informed of any action to be taken by the Commander concerning their Request Mast.

(3) Once the Request Mast has been conducted by the Commander with whom the Marine has Requested Mast, and the Marine has been informed of the disposition of the problem or complaint, the Marine will initial the appropriate line in Part III of enclosure (1).

(4) Instructions as to Request Masts heard by the Inspector General of the Marine Corps or designated representatives while on inspection visits are contained in enclosure (2) of reference (a).

8. Action.

a. Commanders:

(1) Establish a command Request Mast program and publish a Request Mast directive conforming with reference (a), and this order.

(2) Ensure all personnel are familiar with Training Command's Request Mast policy and procedures.

(3) Establish and monitor follow-up procedures to ensure that each Request Mast is resolved in a timely manner and no action adverse or prejudicial to the interests of any Marine results from the Marine's exercise of the right to Request mast.

(4) In matters which are beyond the Commander's authority to resolve, forward the Request Mast to the next higher Commander for consideration and appropriate action.

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(5) Ensure that the records, proceedings, and final disposition of Request Masts are properly safeguarded to prevent such information from having a prejudicial effect on the Marine. Request Mast records shall be maintained separately from service records.

(6) Ensure compliance with applicable provisions of this order

(7) Exercise those disciplinary or administrative options considered appropriate if a Marine commits or attempts to commit interference or reprisal against any Marine exercising their right to Request Mast.

b Adjutant

(1) Ensure proper dissemination of this Order

(2) Ensure proper maintenance of Request Mast records.

(3) Coordinate all officer Request Mast applications with the Commanding General

c. Sergeant Major

(1) Coordinate all enlisted Request Mast applications with the Commanding General.

9. Records Disposition. Pursuant to SECNAVINST 5215.5C, Request Mast records are to be retained for 2 years from the date final action is taken


GEORGE J. FLYNN

DISTRIBUTION LIST B

MARINE CORPS REQUEST MAST APPLICATION

NAVMC 11296 (Rev. 6-97)

SN: 0000-00-888-0350 U/I: EA

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Authority: Title 5, U. S. Code 301; Title 10, USC Section 5013

Principal Purpose: Formal filing of complaints/problems to command personnel.

Routine Uses: To provide a record to facilitate personnel management actions and decisions; to serve as a data source for complaint/problem information and resolution efforts.

Disclosure: Disclosure is voluntary. Failure to complete the requested items could result in delayed command action and/or an inaccurate/incomplete analysis of the complaint/problem.

PART I: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT

1. NAME:	2. RANK:	3. SSN:
4. UNIT:	5. RACE/ETHNIC GROUP:	
6. GENDER:	7. DATE:	

8a. I desire to Request Mast with: (Provide the name and billet of the Commanding Officer with whom you desire to communicate.):

8b. NATURE OF COMPLAINT/PROBLEM: (Give in as much detail as possible the basis of your complaint; describe the incident(s)/behavior(s) and date(s) of the occurrence(s); the names of the individuals involved, witnesses and to whom it may have been previously reported. Include any other information relevant to your complaint/problem. Attach additional sheets, as needed).

8c. REQUESTED REMEDY/OUTCOME: (Clearly state what assistance or complaint resolution you are seeking from the commanding officer named in 8a above.)

9. AFFIDAVIT

I, _____, have read this statement which begins in Block 8b on this page (page 1) and ends on page _____. I fully understand the statement made by me and certify the statement is true. I have initialed all corrections. I make this formal statement without threat of punishment and without coercion, unlawful influence, or unlawful inducement.

(SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT/DATE)

PART II: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE OFFICER CONDUCTING REQUEST MAST

10. DISPOSITION: (Provide a detailed explanation of actions taken or attempted to resolve the complaint/problem, to include any other referrals. If an inquiry/investigation was initiated as a result of this complaint, provide the type conducted and the results. Attach additional sheets as necessary.)

COMMANDING OFFICER SIGNATURE/DATE

PART III: APPLICANT'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REQUEST MAST

(Applicant should initial/complete the appropriate statement(s))

_____ I have had the opportunity to communicate directly with my Commanding Officer named in Block 8a and understand the disposition or probable disposition of my problem/complaint.

_____ I have had the opportunity to communicate directly with _____
(name and billet of commanding officer subordinate to officer named in Block 8a), understand the disposition or probable disposition of my problem/complaint, and voluntarily withdraw this Request Mast.

_____ I have not had the opportunity to communicate directly with my Commanding Officer named in Block 8a.

_____ I have had the opportunity to communicate directly with my Commanding Officer named in Block 8a but have not been informed of the disposition or probable disposition of my problem/complaint.

WITNESS' SIGNATURE/DATE

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE/DATE

Instructions on how to fill out NAVMC 11296

Block 1: Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial.

Block 2: Rank/Paygrade.

Block 3: Social Security Number

Block 4: Unit Address.

Block 5: Spell out Race or Ethnic Group

Block 6: Gender (Male/Female)

Block 7: Date Request Mast Application is prepared

Block 8a: Name and Title of Commander with whom you desire to Request Mast.

Block 8b: In very specific terms, describe the nature of the complaint/problem. Give as much detail as possible concerning the basis of your complaint/problem to include dates, names of individuals involved, witnesses, and to whom you have reported the subject complaint/problem. Attach additional sheets, as needed.

Block 8c: Clearly state what assistance or complaint resolution you are seeking from the Commander listed in Block 8a.

Block 9: Complete and sign where appropriate

Block 10: To be completed by the Commander who takes final disposition action concerning the subject complaint/problem. Please ensure this explanation of disposition is detailed and includes all actions taken to resolve the subject complaint/problem.

Part III: Once informed of the disposition of the subject complaint/problem by the Commander listed in Block 8a, or if you are satisfied with action taken by a lower level Commander, initial the appropriate line, sign and date jointly with a witness.